

483 That modern natives should have forgotten how the statues were trans-
153 ported is strange but understandable. First, we are not sure how thoroughly they were asked about this problem and second, they have a disconcerting way of forgetting the past. There is not a single native on the island who is able to explain the use of the stone adzes which are daily found on the ground, though these implements were manipulated by their great-grandfathers or even by their grandfathers. Solely because in 1868 the natives could not remember the technique of hauling statues, we must not conclude that the carving and transportation of the images ended many centuries ago. It is possible that only a few generations ago a war exterminated the expert stone carvers at Rano-raraku and thus interrupted the tradition.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STONE STATUES

182 The true significance of stone statues is not known. There is no direct
532 evidence that they were ever worshipped. Roggeveen's statement (186, p. 15), so frequently quoted as proof of an ancient cult of the images, is certainly too vague to allow any such conclusion: "... we noticed only that they kindle fire in front of certain remarkably tall stone figures they set up; and thereafter squatting on their heels with heads bowed down, they bring the palms of their hands together and alternately raise and lower them."¹⁵

[20] The members of the Gonzalez expedition (90, p. 94) noticed that the natives appeared to "hold them [the images] in great veneration," and were "displeased" when the Spaniards approached to examine them closely. However, this fear might have concerned the ahu itself rather than the images. Cook (53, vol. 1, p. 296) collected the names of various statues and heard the natives use the word *ariki* in connection with certain of them. On this association Cook and Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 375) base their opinion that the statues "were monuments erected to the memory of some areekes, or kings."¹⁵

Later inquirers (Palmer, 171, p. 174; Jausen, 115, p. 245) were told the same things by natives raised in the pagan traditions. One of the Easter Islanders kidnapped and sent to Peru assured Gill (89, p. 213) that these statues had not been worshipped within the memory of man. Jausen's informants conveyed to him the impression that these statues were merely to decorate the ahu. The only image that is traditionally connected with a cult is the statue Hoa-haka-nana-ia or Taurarenga now in the British Museum. The image called Pou-haka-nonga (now on exhibition in Belgium under the name Hanga-oneone) of the ahu Ana-koiroroa at the bay of Hanga-roa is supposed to have been put there by some king to indicate to the fishermen the best place to catch tuna. Several statues were pointed out to Routledge (194, p. 193) as landmarks indicating boundaries.

¹⁵ Transcribed phonetically the names collected by Cook and Forster are: Ko Tomoara, Marapate, Kanara, Ko Usituku, Matamata. The only names of statues recorded by present natives are: Hanga, Vohu, Titohu, Kere-mata-pou-ha-ngaro-hi-hiva.

The name *moai-is-atua* given by modern natives to some statues does not necessarily imply that they represent gods (194, p. 301). The term may be modern, for a statue symbolizing a god would have borne his specific name. Neither is there evidence that the standing images of Rano-raraku were the images of the successive bird-men, as suggested by Routledge (194, p. 264).

Moerenhout (162, vol. 1, p. 461) and Gill (89, p. 213) make the strange suggestion, eagerly accepted by Rivers (185, p. 306), that these images marked the limits of earth and sea and were believed to prevent the encroachment of the sea. Balfour (10, p. 72) rejects the interpretation on the ground that the very position of the Easter Island statues excludes the idea of any connection with the sea.

Geiseler (87, p. 14) says that these images were believed to be endowed with power and that both the standing and the unbroken prostrate ones were alive. This is probably not true as no objection was made to the removal of an image from Orongo by the *Topaze* Expedition or to the decapitation of an image on the ahu of Hanga-roa.

Thomson (215, p. 498), perhaps on his own authority, declares that these images "were designed as effigies of distinguished persons and intended as monuments to perpetuate their memory." I was told that the statue called *Paro*, of *Ahu-te-pito-te-kura*, was erected by a widow to her dead husband.

If the statues are deified ancestors, they may be compared with Marquesan statues of deified ancestors who had become tutelary tribal deities. The desire for display was certainly a predominant motive for the carving of these giant statues, but it is questionable whether this was sufficient to provoke as much energy as that required for the transportation of enormous statues. On the other hand, to assume that the motive for making the images was entirely religious is to underestimate the tribal pride and competitive instinct of Polynesians.

COMPARISONS WITH OTHER POLYNESIAN STONE IMAGES

The carving of human images from wood and, less often, from stone is one of the culture traits which distinguishes eastern and marginal Polynesia from western Polynesia, where carving of human figures is less developed (35). Large stone images were carved only in the Marquesas, Raivavae, and Easter Island. In these three regions tuff is abundant and is easily worked. In New Zealand the Maoris carved two human figures representing gods from the rhyolitic tuff deposits of Lake Rotorua.

As pointed out by Linton (141, p. 88), everywhere in Polynesia wood carving seems to have preceded stone carving. Several features of Easter Island stone images, such as the flat surfaces, the treatment of hands, and outline of chin, are reminiscent of wooden images there. However, there is more resemblance between the Easter Island stone statues and the Manga-

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